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whether it is a fiction or a fact we cannot miss its meaning. India was advanced even during the time of Agastya and the Sangham; had all the institutions and instruments of a well-developed civilization including Universities, Libraries and Learned Assemblies.

The Cultural History of the Andhras,

(A short study)

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It might have occurred to any one who heard the national songs verses and Vedas recited in the Congress at Cocanada that the Andhras must have had a cultural history of their own. In fact they had. Mention is made of the Andhras in Rigveda, Ramayana and Bharatha. The Andhras had a home and a civilisation even in prehistoric times. Varahamihira mentions 'Andhra.' The 13th inscription of Asoka mentions the Andhras having Buddhist sympathies. The Andhra dynasty ruled in Magadha after Chandra Gupta. The Andhras had a glorious history behind them from the earliest times.

The Andhra culture flourished long before the Madras University began to shape the intellects of its children and the Bureaucracy to take care of its adults. The Andhras are essentially Aryan in origin and culture. From the earliest times, the Andhra Pandit was famous for his Sanskrit learning, for his scientific pronunciation and recital of the Vedas, for his Aryan cult and for his incessant application to the Sasthras both in his private life and in public parliaments. When Panditha Sabhas were held in Ujjain, in Takshasila and Benares by the kings, the Andhra scholar was prominent by his presence, contesting with scholars of other ancient kingdoms. In fact each pandit was proud of his victories. Rabindranath's 'Victory vividly depicts such an intellectual contest between two Pandits. The ancient Universities of Takshasila, Ujjain, Amaravathi, Nalanda and Benares the Hindu Capital of cultural civilisation, were all full of Andhra students and scholars. A study in Benares was indispensable to the ancient Andhra whose ambition was to meet other scholars in Tarka Shastra.

The Andhras had so far advanced in Philosophy and Law that many valuable commentaries in both the branches of learning were written by Andhra Pandits. The Andhras have developed an Andhra School of Hindu Law which has been recognised even by the High Court of Judicature at, Madras (see 1 M. H. C. R. 420.)

Some of the greatest of jurists and Sanskrit poets, astrologers and

grammarians were Andhras and their works are widely read even now. Mention is made of Andhra glory in many Sanskrit works.

Ramananda, the guru of Kabir, was an Andhra. Panditha Raya or Jagannatha Pandith, the famous Sanskrit poet of the time of Shahjahan is an Andhra and he translated Geometry from Arabic. Bhavabhooty the author of Uttara Rama Charitra, Leela Suka the author of Krishna Karnamruta, Narayana Theertha the author of Krishna Leela Tharangini are said to be Andhras. Srinadha, the Inspector-General of Education in Andhra (15th century) is said to have written a commentary to Naishadha. Even some kings of the 15th century, Sarvagnasingama, author of Rasarnavasudha for instance, have done a service to Sanskrit. Nannaya, the author of Andhra Bharatham wrote a Sanskrit Grammar which was widely read in 11th century.

The Andhra country can boast of a Vaidiki sect which preserved the Aryan cult, the Aryan Literature and the Vedic lore and Shastric culture, the glory of Andhra Pandits, and a Niyogi sect which kept up the traditions of ancient polity, political philosophy or *Rajanithi* and at the same time developed a line of poets who made the Andhra Literature what it is to-day.

Down to the 10 century A. D. it may be said that the cultural history of the Andhras is entirely submerged in Sanskrit language and literature. The entire culture is intertwined with its script.

The Andhra script itself is derived from the Sanskrit corruption "Brahmi Lipi." There is a strong resemblance between the old Telugu and Devanagari. A comparison of old inscriptions reveals this singular similarity of the characterstics. The script in the Nandampudi inscription of the 11th century is slightly rounder than that in the inscriptions of Chalukyas in 6th century, and that in the *Yuddhamalla's* inscription of the 8th century at Bezwada. Nannaya the author of Bharatam reformed this script.

The Literary History of Andhra Literature may be divided into the Puranic, the Prabhandaic, the Romantic, the Modern, and the 20th century periods. The first is a classic period of Sanskritic Aryan Hindu culture. The 2nd is a period of quassi-classical Romance. The 3rd is an age of pure Romance. The fourth is a period of transition, of commonsense translations and creative criticism. The last is a period of an entirely modern international civilisation and culture and consequently of quaint originality and beauty.

The seats of learning varied from Rajahmundry to Nellore,-Ekasilanagar in 11th and in 13th centuries, Vijayanagar in 14th century, Mysore, Madura, Pudukkota, Tanjore, and Kalahasti in the 15th century, even Gadval was seat of Andhra culture. Ujjain and Benares were cosmopolitan. Pittapuram, Bobbili, and Vijayanagaram were the home of Sanscrit poets in the times of 17th and 18th centuries. At the present day, Rajahmundry, Cocanada, Ellore, Masulipatam, Nellore and Madras are seats of Andhra literary movement.

Rajarajanarendra in the 11th century, the Reddi dynasty in the 13th and in 14th centuries, the Vijayanagar Empire in the 14th and 15 centuries encouraged learning. Poets flourished in the courts of the kings and culture was preserved and popularised. There were more than three hundred important poets and more than a thousand minor poets during these times and all of them are men of talent and merit. Literature in all its branches except the Drama flourished and was the envy of the contemporary vernaculars, for already Sanskrit was fast becoming the language of the Pandits.

Many of the works referred to in the existing literature have disappeared in the religious dissensions between Jainism, Saivism and Vishnavaism and Mohammadanism. More than 82 names of works are available.

Though there are numerous references to Andhra literature prior to Nannechoda and Nannaya there are none now available. *Nannechoda's Kumarasambhava* and Nannaya's Andhra Bharatam are the first works of the Puranic period. Between the 11th and the 14th centuries the 18 Puranas of Sanskrit were translated. Bharatham was completed by the 14th century and Bhagavatham by the 15th and Ramayanam also. These translations are all beautiful reproductions with compact plot characterisation, and exquisite liiterary merit. The poets are all men of great individuality and freely expressed their own opinions both of the Puranas and contemporary times. Highly picturesque nature descriptions and character sketches are found therein. The greatest names of the period are Nannaya. Thikkana, Yerrapragada, Pothana, Srinandha. During this period there were conflicts between Vishnu and Saiva principles—and yet Sankaracharya's Advaitam had a good hold on the country. Even the Vaistnavite work, Bhagavata is full of Advaita Philosophy. During this age also the poets had encouragement in the Reddi rule. Srinadha was minister of education and Vamana Bhatta the poet-laureate in the Court of Peda Komati Vema. Trade and agriculture flourished. Motupalli was the seaport for Andhra Country and great trade in horses, silks, and pearls flourished. In spite of this there were constant wars between the kings themselves and the Muhammadans. The kings were blood thirsty. During this period also there were many social reformers of the type of Vemana the sage-poet. Ramananda, the guru of Kabir, and Tyagaraja the sage-songster preached the philosophy of Adwaita, Dwaita and Saivism in their own way. Vemana's poems are famous and popular even among foreigners.

The Prabhandaic period of Andhra Literature is really the Augustan Age. The period was famous for the glorious Vijayanagar Empire, (now almost forgotten) as can be seen from the condition of the trade and civilisation and opulence of the time described by Pais, Nuniz, Niketin, and Abdur Razak. It was the best period of Andhra rule and culture. Sri Krishnadevaraya himself a ripe scholar, drew around him the eight famous star poets of his age known as the *Ashta Diggajas* (the eight regional elephants). These are really intel-

lectual elephants. This is an age of classical Romance. The theme is usually classic, at times original, and is full of romantic beauty, quaint plot and characterisation. They are all verse-tales which may well be called verse novels, full of love and adventure and rich in nature descriptions and observing the *lakshanas* of Sanskrit *kavya* and Culture. Civilisation centred round this monarch who himself is reputed to have written a beautiful Prabandha, the Amuktamalyada. Peddana, Ramakrishna, Timmanna are all names to conjure with in Andhra literature. This brings us down from the 15th to the 16th century. The Prabandhaic craze continued during the 17th century also but now it took a new form. New plots, novel conceptions, daring ideas came in with the contemporary of Shakespeare as if by psychic communication, when Pingali Suranna wrote his *Kalapurnodayam* the grandest of verse novels in Telugu. Mr. C. R. Reddy, late Inspecter-General of Education, Mysore, rightly discribes it as the greatest of Prabandhas. His other Prabandhas are also full of the same grandeur of conception, richness of beauty and taste. He has all the high qualities of a great poet. His imagination and language are exquisite. He is the greatest writer of Romantic Verse-Tale.

The successors of Suranna had imitated him in trying at new ways in Prabandha Romance. With them began the age of pure romance, love, and adventure sometimes verging on sensuous beauty of the type of beauty of the poetry of Keats, characterise their works. Brilliant nature descriptions, exquisite characterisation relieve the monotony of conception which happens to be unfortunately the fashion of the day. The best works of this age are *Vijaya Vilasam* or Arjuna's adventures and Sarangadhara Vijayam and Bilhaniyam while there are some sensuous examples of the type of *Tarasasanka Vijayam.* This century is an imitation and improvement in a way on the old period as there is freshness of conception.

Mention must be made of certain types in Andhra literature.

The *Dwipada Kavya or the two-stanzas' verse-tales.* There are popular verse tales in this metre even from early days. Srinadha's Palnaty Veeracharitram and Ranganadha Ramayanam are famous works. Then again there is that species called the *Viragiti*, apostrophies to Lord Krishna, Rama and the story of war between Bobbili and Vjiayanagar resemble Maharatta odes.

Kirtanams; yela, gondala Songs, Tatwa or philosophical Songs, love Songs and Harikathas. These are emotional lyrical lore versified in highly musical strains. There are parallels in the psalms of Maharatta paints and Bengali songs that we hear from ordinary people. The Sathakam or Century cluster of Verses is a distinctly Andhra product. As early as the 12th century and the 13th this species Sprang up from very great poets and was a species of literary lyric and latterley it developed into the satire in the 16th and 17th centuries. Such for instance are the Chowdappa Satakam, Kukkuteswara and Ramalingesvara and Venugopala Satakams. There are Satakams of

the highest order and importance. Of late, Satakams are written on broomsticks and eatables. The Dandakam is another species common to Sanskrit and Telugu. They are found in Puranas.

The 18th and the early 19th centuries are in a way less important than the period of the Romantic age. There are comparatively less important though more numerous productions. There is a mixture of languages and thought. There are signs of Canarese and Marathi along with Persian and Urdu influences. The *chitra kavitva* or involved poetry became more popular. With the advent of the settled rule of the East India Company and the missionary, a period of poverty and transition, panditism and clerical instincts killed the real creative genius. Very soon the English system of education was introduced and a contempt for the native and a regard for the western standards of life and taste were slowly taught. Telugu Literature lived purely on villagers' demand and the cheap supply of Madras printers. Old books came to be presented on rough paper and Andhra Literature was crawling in the guzili bazaar for some years.

Meanwhile there was an awakening. The Social Reform movement was primarily responsible for the regeneration of Andhra Literature. A band of public-spirited men who happened to go beyond their college studies and read the English Literature were infused with new ideas of liberty and social reform. The Bengal Brahmo movement and the lives of Ramamohan Roy and Vidyasagar inspired young men of Andhra. Men began to think and then the necessity to re-read their old literature and revive and improve it by the incorporation of the western culture therein occurred to some. Rajahmundry became the seat of this new movement. The man who was sensitive to this new impulse and took the tide at its flow is the late Mr. K. Veeresalingam Pantulu, the leader of the Social Reform movement in Andhra and the pioneer of new ways in modern Andhra Literature. He established a magazine and formed public opinion in all matters, social, economic and cultural and created a healthy taste for criticism. Mr. K. Veeresalingam Pantulu is the pioneer of the modern movement in Andhra literature. He is the first link between the 19th and 20th centuries; between the Latin and the Sanskritic cultures, the ancient and modern standards. What the men of letters of the 18th and 19th centuries have done to the English Literature Mr. Veeresalingam Pantulu and his contemporaries did for the Andhras. He is the pioneer of the regular Novel, Drama, and Biography. Mr. Vedam Venkataraya Sastry rendered Sanskrit Dramas and story into Telugu and contributed an excellent original historical drama which defies criticism. He is a ripe scholar in Sanskrit and is not lacking in modern criticism. Messrs. Kokkonda Venkataratnam Pantulu, Akundi Vyasamoorty Sastry, and Vaddadi Subbarayudu are modern poets of merit but they have entirely classical models before them. Mr. Vavilicolanu Subba Rao is at once a classic and a modern. By his Ramayana and his Prabandhas he is classed as a classic. By his *Krishna Leelamruta*, *Aryakathanidhy*, *Hithacharya* (what a person ought to-

know) series and his other works, he is a modern critic and educationist of the highest order. His *Subhadra Parinayam* is an excellent drama. By the beginning of the 19th century the Telugu Novel, the Telugu Drama and the Essay have taken definite shape. The cultural development has had an external impetus by the meeting of the East and West more closely.

If the latter 19th and early 20th centuries saw the electrical development in Science, the Fabian school of Political Philosophy, the age of Materlinck, Romain Rolland, Anatole-France and Bernard Shaw in literature, Paedre Weskie and Irving in art, it has no less seen the age of Ravivarma in art, and Rabindranath and Bankimchandra in literature, and Bose in Science, the Social Reform Movement, the Brahmo & AryaSamaj, the struggle for Swaraj, intellectual luminaries of the type of Sir Bhashyam Iyangar, T. Subba Rao, Ramanujam and Vidyasagar and physical giants of the type of Professor Ramamoorthy and the Great war and Mahatma Gandhi.

The 20th century saw the birth of the modern school of art and literature. Even intellectual striplings and spinsters work hand in hand under the new impetus. A new spirit of research, patriotism and new cultural standards have sprung up. Independent criticism, daring literary enterprises, creative genius, and quaint modernism characterise the new era.

The new school of literature aims at an interpretation of the classics, poetry in life and originality in art and novelty of conception and adventures in literary standards. The transition is seen in the two great poets Tirupathy Venkateswara Kavulu. Their dramas mark the new spirit of re-interpretation of the classics and Romantic standards of life and poetry. Their other works are full of originality and beauty. The Drama took a definite shape. Mr. D. Krishnama Chary's, V.K. Sreenivasa Rao's Dramas are good specimens. The Kanyasulkam of gurzada apparao occupies a high place as a Social Drama.

The novel became an important species of literature in the hands of some good writers. The lead of Mr. Veeresalingam was followed up by Mr. Chilakamarthy Lakshmy Narasimham. The Vignanachandrika Publishing House perfected the historical novel while the Andhra Pracharini gave a definite turn to the social and detective novel. The Psychological novel is yet to come. They are pouring in from many quarters.

The Essay again was first written by Mr. Veeresalingam. He wrote the critical, biographical and topical essay. Many writers have since written, but the greatest essayists of the age are Mr. Panuganty Lakshinarasimha Rao, whose humour and style are inimitable and Mr. Mutnuri Kristna Rao, the editor of Kistna Patrika, Masulipatam. The Magazines contain some good essays. The lyric poetry is one species that had a late origin. The Sathaka literature and story verses of the old poets had in them the beginnings of the lyric poetry. Tyagaraja songs are the nucleus. But real subjective romantic lyric as a literary conception came in with Mr. Rayaprolu Subba Rao and Abbury Rama kristna Rao. They are the leaders of the new school of Andhra Romantic poetry. There are many others whose

names are well known to readers of magazines.

The short story is the present day need and must really form a very important part of literature. There have been stories and stories, some many years old and some very recent in origin but most of them are not real short stories. There are however the real makings of the short story in many of the stories. Some of the stories of Rabindranath, Bankimchandra and Tolstoy have been translated. There are some original stories written by Panuganty Lashminarasimha Rao and Vanguri Subba Rao. The Sahity, a local monthly, is doing a service by publishing good short stories.

Literary criticism and historical research have had a beginning even when Mr. Veeresalingam, the pioneer, wrote the lives of poets; but since then Mr. Chilukury Veerabhadra Rao whose history of Andhras, and the late Mr. K. V. Lakshmana Rao whose histories of India and whose researches are all now published, did yeoman service to the Andhras. The Andhra Parishat Patrika and the Archaeological departments did some useful work also. The name of the late Mr. Vangury Subba Rao stands high in the field of literary criticism and historical research, not because he is a greater, scholar than Mr. K. V. Lakshmana Rao but because he wrote the thing that the Andhra student of literature needed. He wrote the history of the Andhra literature on excellent lines, and the history of the Sathaka poets and also the life and teachings of Vemana. All these three works give him a permanant place in the history of Telugu literature. Mr. Puranam Sury Sastry is a rising star in the Andhra horizon and his works are very interesting and instructive. His Natyambujam and Natyothpalam are the two latest arrivals in the field of literary criticism.